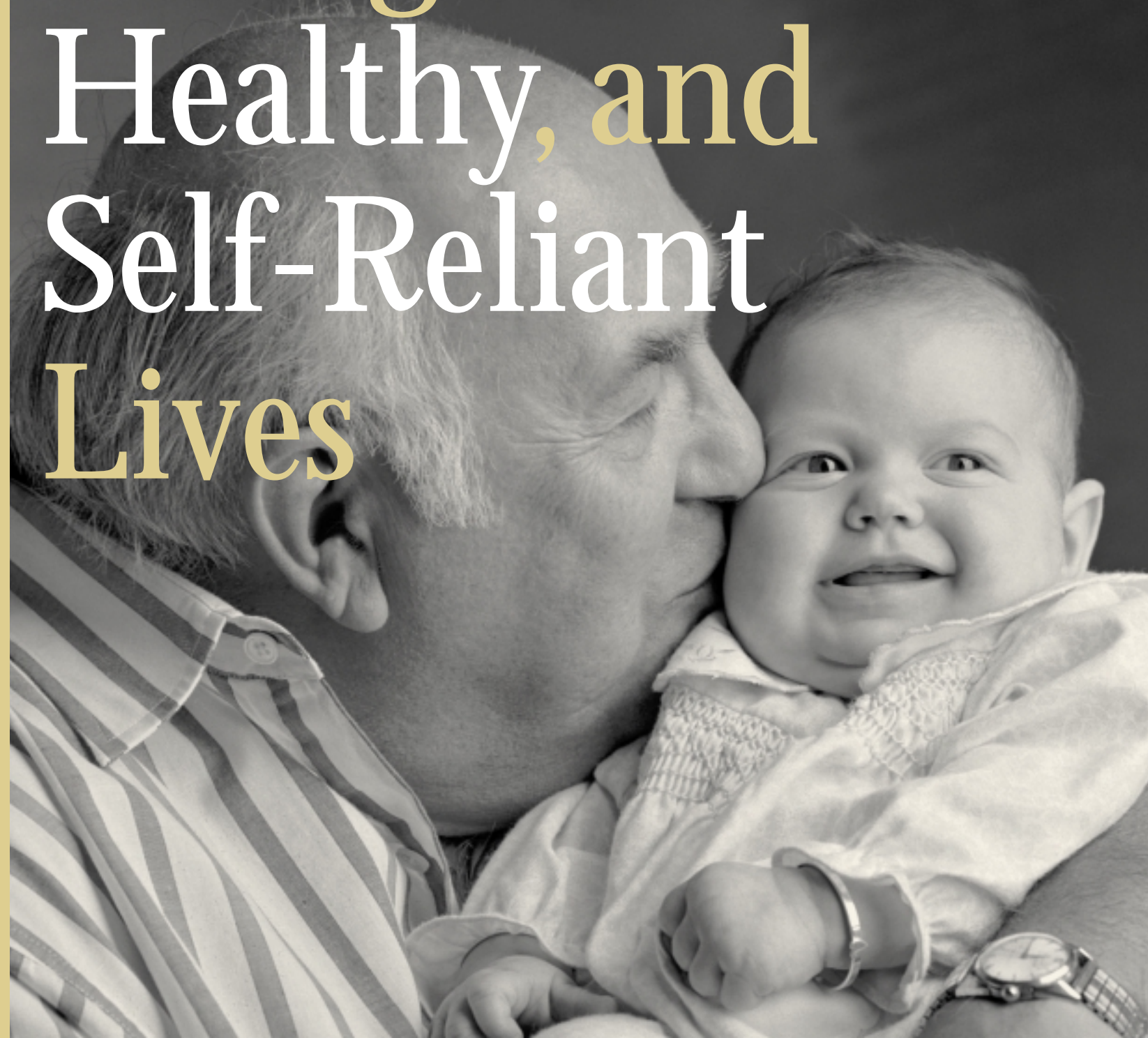




GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
2003 ANNUAL REPORT

Georgians Living Safe, Healthy, and Self-Reliant Lives



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
2003 ANNUAL REPORT WWW.DHR.GEORGIA.GOV

Strengthening Services, Overcoming Challenges

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This has been an extraordinary year for DHR. In the face of tight budget constraints, a continuing threat of terrorism, and ongoing challenges to Georgia’s families and children, the department streamlined administration while strengthening key services. DHR continued to carry out its mission: *To effectively deliver compassionate, innovative, and accountable services to individuals, families and communities.*

DHR delivers most of these services to all Georgians regardless of income, race, age, gender, condition, or location in cities or rural communities. We continue to protect all Georgians from epidemics, food contamination, health consequences of natural disasters, and bioterrorism; we inspect and ensure safety at hospitals, daycare centers and nursing homes; we offer families help with caregiving for disabled loved ones; we protect children from abuse and neglect; and we help older Georgians to live independently by remaining in their homes.

At the same time, we must make sure that health and social services reach the most vulnerable Georgians: people with disabilities; people who are struggling with addiction; frail elderly people striving to maintain maximum independence; children at risk of or experiencing developmental disabilities and their families; people without health insurance; single parents needing help to overcome barriers to employment; children whose families cannot safely care for them; people with limited English proficiency; and people with mental disabilities who are striving to live productively in their communities.

TO ACCOMPLISH ALL THIS WE HAVE DONE THE FOLLOWING:

- ◆ Restructured the system of services for people with mental illness, developmental disabilities and addictive diseases, to move more people from institutions to the community and improve the oversight of community-based residential programs.

◆ Expanded Child Protective Services staff, upgraded caseworker training and education levels and established a program to help caseworkers handle stress.

◆ Created an Internet-based “portal” system that increases public access to services and vital information.

◆ Built a public health bioterrorism response system that also protects Georgians against a wide range of health threats.

◆ Improved performance measurement and accountability for all divisions and offices.
- ◆ Collected a record amount of child support to help families remain self-sufficient.

◆ Found adoptive homes for more children and streamlined the adoption process.

◆ Replaced public children's shelters in Atlanta with a new process for handling emergency placements.

◆ Received national recognition for excellence of state hospitals, childcare agencies, and adoption services.

◆ Helped bring about a steady decline in infant mortality and teenage pregnancies.

◆ Improved the quality of childcare, in partnership with Smart Start Georgia, and upgraded childcare provider training.

These and other highlights of State Fiscal Year 2003 are presented in the pages that follow.

Funds Saved/Earned
Through Innovation and Achievement

DIVISION OF AGING SERVICES		
Saved for Georgians in health-related costs through a public/private partnership with Pharmaceutical Research and Managers of America.	Over	\$ 28,000,000
Saved by the Community Care Services Program in state and federal Medicaid costs that would have paid for nursing home care, by helping frail elderly people remain in their homes. (Average cost of CCSP per consumer is \$5,836; nursing care costs average \$22,151; savings average \$16,315 per consumer.)		\$239,000,000
DIVISION OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES		
Received federal bonus for high performance, for helping people find jobs and for percentage of eligible children served in subsidized childcare.	\$	4,400,000
Obtained childcare dollars not used by other states.	\$	2,200,000
DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND ADDICTIVE DISEASES		
Saved by consolidating administration for Gracewood and Georgia Regional Hospital-Augusta (and will save \$813,417 in the FY 2004 budget).	\$	250,000
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH		
Saved in cancer treatment costs for low-income, uninsured patients whose treatment was paid through the Cancer State Aid Program, thanks to discounts by participating providers.	\$	5,600,000 (estimated)
Saved thanks to the tobacco Quit Line (\$4.6 million in medical costs and \$5 million in lost productivity from illness) since it was started two years ago.	\$	9,600,000 (estimated)
Contributed by the American Cancer Society and the National Black Leadership on Cancer (\$250,000 each) to match DHR's funding for the Community Partners Cancer Education Project.	\$	500,000
Contributed by media in free advertising time to the Cancer Awareness and Education Campaign.	\$	1,101,000 (estimated)
Saved by the Women, Infants and Children nutrition program re-bidding its data processing services contract.	\$	400,000
OFFICE OF ADOPTIONS		
Received federal Adoption Incentive Grant Award for increasing number of adoptions, in partnership with DFCS.	\$	374,000
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS		
Saved by converting to electronic distribution of publications, news releases and other documents.	\$	24,300
OFFICE OF FINANCIAL SERVICES		
Saved by moving DHR payroll and operating accounts to a more cost-effective bank.	\$	400,000
OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY		
Will realize future savings by selling off Microsoft licenses, through agreement in FY 2003 with Georgia Technology Authority and Microsoft.	\$	600,000 (estimated)
OFFICE OF INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES		
Earned for the DHR general fund, by retaining 35 cents of every dollar reclaimed from intentional program violations (fraud), as provided by federal law. The amount reclaimed in FY 2003 was the highest among the Southeastern states.	\$	2,100,000 (approx.)
Established claims for overpayments for TANF, food stamps and childcare due to client or provider fraud or error.	\$	8,800,000
TOTAL SAVINGS FOR CITIZENS OF GEORGIA:		\$303,349,300



Division of Aging Services

The Division of Aging Services administers a statewide system of services for seniors, their families and caregivers so that older Georgians can be safe, healthy, independent and self-reliant. The division is focusing on the outcomes of those services and streamlining program operations, to make sure the services are cost-effective and respond to the needs of elderly Georgians, despite the challenges posed by increased demand due to a growing older population.

Almost every family, regardless of income, race or location, will at some time cope with the special needs of one or more older members. The older population of Georgia is growing rapidly. People over age 60 are expected to have increased by 81.6 percent between 1990 and 2010, from 893,049 people in 1990 to approximately 1,622,000. Those 85 and older will increase by 265 percent by 2010. The division is meeting this challenge with continuing service improvement and innovation.

“I can’t believe the difference in my father, who weighed only 87 pounds when he entered the Community Care Services Program. He used to stay in bed and refuse to eat or bathe. Now he likes his CCSP aide so much he will do anything she asks. He is up waiting for his bath each day, dresses and sometimes walks to the porch to sit outside. The aide makes breakfast and helps him eat. CCSP has given me a few more years with Daddy.”

- ◆ Implemented a new Caregiver Program that provided funds for 109 elderly people to hire friends or family members to help them with daily activities, transportation, medication schedules and other needs.
- ◆ Found unsubsidized jobs for 138 seniors in FY 2003, earning the fourth highest ranking in the nation for the division’s Senior Services Employment Program, according to the U.S. Department of Labor’s Division of Older Worker Programs.
- ◆ Won awards from Dannon Yogurt, the Georgia Dietetic Association and the Federal Nutrition Services for a nutrition program for older people.
- ◆ Helped 14,687 Medicaid-eligible people who are functionally impaired to continue living in their homes and communities as an alternative to nursing homes. The Community Care Services Program accomplished this at a per-person cost that is one of the lowest among the Southeastern states. Services include alternative living (supervised, staffed residences); home health services; home-delivered meals; an emergency response system; a variety of support services to help with daily living, such as light house-keeping and personal care; respite for caregivers; and social work.
- ◆ Through the Home and Community-Based Services Program, helped non-Medicaid-eligible people to continue to live in their homes through homemaker/chore services (for 4,214 people); adult day care (1,930); health promotion and disease prevention services including nutrition counseling and physical fitness programs; and meals at senior centers (for 14,013 people) or delivered to people who are homebound (16,598).
- ◆ Helped people with Alzheimer’s disease through a number of innovative programs, including mobile day care; self-directed care model programs that give caregivers more choices of services; and congregational respite, a program which trains the faith community to provide relief for caregivers. A total of 3,919 people were served.
- ◆ Counseled and educated seniors on health insurance issues and helped them to apply for all available low-cost prescription drug assistance programs, through the Georgia Cares Program. In FY 2003 the program served 18,200 people, saving them a total of \$28,240,497 in out-of-pocket expenses.
- ◆ Through the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, advocated for residents of nursing homes and personal care homes to help them resolve problems with services and benefits. Last year the program visited and provided information to 222,588 people and worked to resolve 8,299 complaints.

Division of Family & Children Services

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) helps families become self-sufficient, strengthens at-risk families, and protects children and adults from abuse and neglect. These are among the most important and difficult functions of state government. The economic downturn during 2002-3 increased the challenges facing all DFCS services.

Welfare rolls dropped by 47 percent from 1997 to 2000 following national and state welfare reform, which emphasized helping recipients find employment. However, the rolls increased again by nine percent from 2000 to 2003 as unemployment rose in Georgia. Child abuse and neglect can occur more often when families are stressed economically. To meet these challenges, DFCS worked to improve staff training, recruitment, retention, performance and accountability and provide more effective supports to families and children in crisis.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

- ◆ Improved training and salary levels for caseworkers, increased the number of staff hired with social work degrees, and offered incentives for staff to continue their education and pursue specialized degrees.
- ◆ Investigated 69,108 reports of child neglect or abuse in calendar year 2002, a nine percent increase from the previous year. Substantiated 24,425 cases of maltreatment based on these reports, involving 41,206 children.
- ◆ Closed the Fulton and DeKalb public children's emergency shelters and replaced them with family resource centers that move children in crisis rapidly into appropriate services. The DeKalb center is operated by a private agency.
- ◆ The division's Special Investigations Unit, established in 2000, works with local and state law enforcement agencies to investigate all child deaths and serious injuries. The unit conducted 322 child death investigations, 240 serious injury investigations, and 628 foster home investigations in 2002.

FOSTER CARE

- ◆ Provided foster care or oversight for an average of 14,500 children each month.
- ◆ Assessed over 5,000 children entering foster care, in an effort to return children to their families sooner and prevent their re-entry into foster care. Foster care staff trained over 2,000 DFCS staff and providers to use these assessments in case planning and service delivery.

- ◆ Passed a rigorous federal review of children in foster care and was found to be in substantial compliance with the Title IV-E federal funding program, with a 97 percent accuracy rate for evaluated cases. The standard for substantial compliance is an accuracy rate of 85 percent. A high error rate can cost millions in penalties.

CHILDCARE AND PARENT SERVICES

- ◆ Contracted for childcare provider management and payment services in 26 counties, in order to speed up payment and allow providers to send invoices through the Internet.
- ◆ Obtained \$2.2 million in federal funds, not used by other states, to provide subsidized childcare for an additional 10,529 children from 8,099 families. The program served a total of 62,331 children so their parents could go to work or employment training.
- ◆ Increased reimbursement for care for children with special needs in 11 counties.
- ◆ In 11 counties, increased payments to providers of subsidized childcare who meet higher quality standards.



A 39-year-old man was given full custody of his five children aged 4 to 11. He was reported to Child Protective Services because the family's housing was inadequate and the children were not sufficiently supervised. DFCS helped him manage his money better so he was able to rent a better house. A family service worker helped him obtain at-home childcare and visited twice weekly to help the children learn chores. A case manager provided the father with counseling and saw that he had Medicaid and food stamps. He is still employed, still cares for his children, and has completed his case plan successfully.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

- ◆ Won a \$4.4 million federal High Performance Bonus for improvement in helping recipients find employment and the percentage of eligible children served in subsidized childcare.
- ◆ Ranked first among the states for the greatest increase in the percentage of TANF recipients entering jobs in Federal Fiscal Year 2002.
- ◆ Provided case management and support services to 57,823 families in FY 2003, compared to 54,682 families in FY 2002. Served an average of 10,838 clients monthly with transportation, tuition assistance, assessments, and other services to help them qualify for jobs. Other state partners provided job training, literacy education, job development and placement, and substance abuse treatment.

FOOD STAMPS

- ◆ Served 700,876 people, 6.5 percent more than last year.
- ◆ Simplified definitions of income, resources and utility allowance to align with eligibility standards for other programs and streamlined the application process.
- ◆ Reduced reporting requirements, to reduce paperwork for both staff and clients.
- ◆ Lowered the state error rate in food stamp distribution to 4.93 percent in Federal Fiscal Year 2003. This rate was below the national average of 6.54 percent and down from 6.73 percent in FFY 2002.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

- ◆ The Low Income Energy Assistance Program helped eligible Georgians keep warm by paying \$17,859,828 in fuel bills on behalf of 91,397 low income households.
- ◆ Provided over one million households \$3.5 million worth of emergency food, and funded over five million meals served at soup kitchens and other group feeding sites.
- ◆ Helped 4,073 adults and 4,163 children escape domestic violence through grants to a statewide network of 43 family violence shelters.
- ◆ Helped more than 1,200 refugees from 33 countries through over \$5 million in contracts to public and private agencies for social services, health services, and other assistance.

MEDICAID ELIGIBILITY

- ◆ Managed the eligibility status of an average of 143,550 Aged, Blind and Disabled Medicaid cases and an average of 345,489 Family Medicaid cases each month.
- ◆ Processed 89,967 applications for pregnant women and children from low-income working families to enroll them in Peachcare for Kids, Medicaid and other healthcare benefit programs. Right From the Start Outreach Project staff assist clients at nontraditional times and locations in their communities.

Division of Mental Health, Developmental

After Chad was diagnosed with autism his future looked grim, but Kelly, his mother, didn't give up. "They said he couldn't learn. He couldn't talk. He'd throw things at me and put his fist through the wall. The school would call me every other day to take him home." A working single mother, Kelly asked her MHDDAD regional office for help. Chad got a Medicaid waiver that pays for therapy and a special communication tool that he can use to express his needs and even tell simple stories. "He's improved so much, he's just not the same kid," says Kelly. Now 12, he goes to horseback riding camp, plays on a bowling team, and is learning to use a computer. In September his elementary school named him Student of the Month.



STRENGTHENED ACCOUNTABILITY

- ◆ Consolidated 13 regional offices into seven, with greater accountability and responsibility for providing quality assurance and technical assistance to community services, as authorized by the 2002 General Assembly's passage of House Bill 498.
- ◆ Continued the PERMES system that measures service outcomes and statewide performance, based on interviews with consumers and their families.

EXPANDED AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

- ◆ Completed the move of 129 people with developmental disabilities from state institutions to community living, which began in FY 2002.
- ◆ Planned and began the transition of 65 people under age 21 from state hospital developmental disability units and six children from nursing homes to community homes. Began development of eight new state-run community homes to serve 25 of those with the most complex problems. The homes are administered and staffed by hospital personnel, who, in many cases, served the same people in the institution and thus could provide continuity and a familiar face in the new setting.

- ◆ Continued to develop more community service options for people with developmental disabilities and for people with severe and persistent mental illnesses.
- ◆ Contracted with outside agencies to assure that services are meeting the needs of consumers with developmental disabilities, using standardized quality measures statewide to replace a formerly fragmented monitoring system. The agencies work with families and consumers to assess the needs of each consumer, evaluate the success of their service plans, and adjust the plans as the consumers' needs change.
- ◆ Brought in more federal dollars to reduce barriers to transitioning people from institutions to the community, through a Real Choice Systems Change grant of \$1.4 million.
- ◆ In cooperation with the Office of Regulatory Services, established new rules to implement community living arrangements (required by legislation that restructured state MHDDAD services) that allow people with developmental disabilities to choose more independence in their community home.

Disabilities & Addictive Diseases

The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases (MHDDAD) is engaged in removing barriers to community living and giving people with mental disabilities the tools to participate fully in their community, through flexible, high quality services geared to the individual – not the disability – in a cost-effective manner.

The division restructured its system of services to move more people from institutions to the community in compliance with the *Olmstead v. L.C.* U.S. Supreme Court decision, improved the oversight of community-based residential services, provided more choices for consumers and their families, and reduced waiting lists for community services to serve more consumers.

In FY 2003, some 96 percent of individuals receiving services through MHDDAD were served in the community.

INNOVATIONS

- ◆ Continued the focus of mental health and substance abuse services to de-emphasize clinic visits and offer a broader variety of services that help individual consumers recover, solve problems and function in their communities. This was made possible by implementing the Medicaid Rehabilitation Option in FY 2002, in place of the Clinic Option, so the new services can be reimbursed for people covered by Medicaid.
- ◆ Received national recognition for Georgia as the first state in the U.S. to develop a Certified Peer Specialist program, for consumers trained to help other consumers in recovery. Certified 169 peer specialists since the program began in December 2001.
- ◆ Provided technical assistance and support to eight consumer-operated peer support centers that serve as a model for other states. Certified peer specialists work in these and other programs.
- ◆ Specifically targeted minority populations, including people with limited English proficiency, with services such as after-school and summer camp substance abuse prevention programs for Latino youth and conversational English classes and alcohol and drug abuse studies for Asian and Pacific Island youth and their parents.

MORE OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

- ◆ Developed community homes for youth with severe emotional disturbance who do not need to remain in hospital intensive treatment units.
- ◆ To prevent hospitalization of children and adolescents and preserve families, provided intensive family intervention and crisis services to 3,062 children and teens, along with their families.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

- ◆ Expanded the number of counties with substance abuse prevention programs from 141 in FY 2001 to 155 in FY 2003. Ninety-seven percent of Georgia's 159 counties now have prevention programs.
- ◆ Continued "Ready for Work" substance abuse treatment programs located throughout the state that help recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families remove substance abuse as a barrier to employment. The 22 residential programs served 800 people and the 34 outpatient programs served 1,356.

Division of Public Health

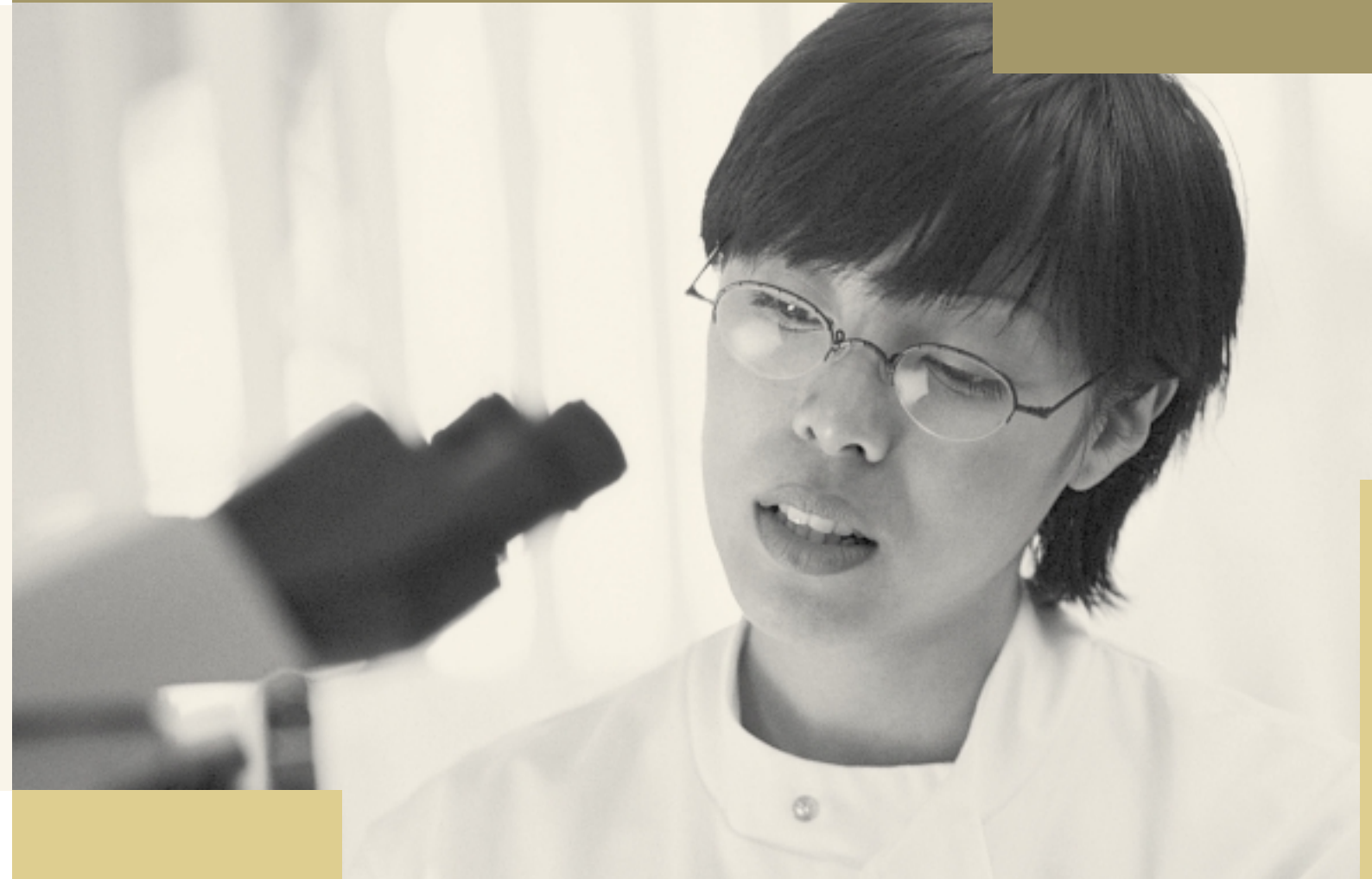
The Division of Public Health has many different services that protect Georgians from a wide variety of health threats ranging from influenza to food-borne illness. The division is responsible for disease prevention and control, reducing injury-related deaths and disabilities, and promoting healthy lifestyles. Working through 19 district public health offices and county health departments in each of Georgia's 159 counties, Public Health continually assesses the health status of the population, while assuring that people have the resources and information necessary to remain healthy, and helping to establish and implement sound public health policy.

Even before the attacks of September 11, 2001, Public Health had been preparing to protect the population against bioterrorism. This is an extension of the division's traditional function of detecting and controlling naturally occurring disease outbreaks and addressing the health consequences of natural disasters such as hurricanes and floods. Federal funding for this new responsibility has enabled Public Health to strengthen its response to naturally occurring disease outbreaks over the past two years, including SARS and hepatitis A during FY 2003.

In addition, funds from the settlement of a lawsuit against the tobacco industry provided increased resources for tobacco use prevention activities and an expanded cancer control program that works in collaboration with the Georgia Cancer Coalition and other state and private agencies.

Declining rates of infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, and tobacco use by teenagers all reflect some of the division's effective efforts.

Less dramatic, but no less important, are the division's ongoing efforts to increase information available to the public, including patterns and causes of chronic diseases and statistical information about infectious diseases, births and deaths from all causes.



A Public Health nurse in Macon reported, "I was talking with a mom whose 6-month-old baby boy had just been diagnosed with loss of hearing in both ears. When I asked if she had insurance, she said it would only cover the testing and didn't know what they were going to do. I told her the Universal Newborn Hearing Program could pay for hearing aids. She began to cry and so did I. The program was able to help this family buy the hearing aids, which would have cost them about \$3,000 out of pocket."

Division of Public Health*(continued)*

CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION AND WELLNESS PROMOTION

- ◆ Provided free mammograms for low-income women and encouraged early screening, helping to ensure that 80 percent of Georgia women 40 and older have had a mammogram within the past two years (exceeding the federal government's Healthy People 2010 objective of 70 percent).
- ◆ Doubled the number of women screened for breast or cervical cancer, from 7,800 in FY 2000 to 18,100 in FY 2003.
- ◆ Diagnosed 64 percent more women with early stage breast cancer in FY 2003 than the previous year. Treatment is more effective when cancer is diagnosed early.
- ◆ Helped 60 percent more low income, uninsured patients pay for cancer treatment (at an average of half the usual cost to Medicaid) thanks to discounts from volunteer doctors and other providers – an estimated cost savings of \$5.6 million.
- ◆ Established a tobacco Quit Line that received 26,000 calls from people seeking referrals for help. In two years the Quit Line has potentially saved Georgians an estimated \$9.6 million (\$4.6 million in medical costs and \$5 million in lost productivity from illness) by helping people to stop smoking.
- ◆ To improve community health by increasing opportunities for physical activity, implemented a District Trail Project funded by DHR's Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative in eight Public Health districts. Improved walking trails, playgrounds, and swimming pools that have been used by an estimated 75,000 people as part of an effort to increase physical activity.
- ◆ Began offering Georgia employers assessments of their worksite programs that seek to improve nutrition, physical activity and safety and reduce tobacco use, through the Cardiovascular Health Program. Effective employee wellness programs can boost productivity and lower insurance costs.
- ◆ Treated 15,000 patients with hypertension through the Stroke and Heart Attack Prevention Program operating in 18 Public Health districts. Fifty-four percent of these patients were able to effectively control their blood pressure, compared to the national average of 37 percent.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND BIOTERRORISM PREPAREDNESS

- ◆ Helped two hospitals to upgrade from Level III to Level II trauma centers.
- ◆ Received excellent evaluations from the CDC for nearly every Georgia Public Health district's capacity to receive, store and dispense supplies of pharmaceuticals from the Strategic National Stockpile in the event of a major disease outbreak or bioterrorism event.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND INJURY CONTROL

- ◆ Inspected more than 60,700 food service facilities, over 13,200 swimming pools and 3,600 tourist accommodations, approved nearly 47,700 new sewage systems, tested 10,000 well water samples, investigated over 400 waterborne illnesses, 10,000 animal bites, and over 25,000 environmental health complaints and certified approximately 750 emergency medical technicians.
- ◆ Distributed 4,350 child safety seats and 3,560 smoke alarms to Medicaid or low-income eligible families, in coordination with local partners. Thirty-eight children had documented reduced injuries due to the child safety seats. The smoke alarms saved an additional 38 lives by alerting residents in time to escape fires.
- ◆ Contributed to the overall decline in severe injuries to children involved in car crashes in Georgia, the leading cause of death for Georgians aged 1 to 44. In 2002, with the help of Public Health programs, 30 percent fewer children were injured in car crashes than in 1994, representing some 1,500 children. The rate of deaths of children under age five declined 46 percent.



An elderly husband and wife wrote to the Columbus public health district to nominate their social services technician for an award: “We look forward to Ms. Robbins’ call at 9 a.m. each morning. Since she has been calling, I have not missed giving my wife her medicine. She adds a ray of sunshine to our day. She is always so pleasant and willing to help us in any way possible.”



A Valdosta man at first resented the law that requires a Public Health environmental health specialist to inspect his new field drain. "Being of the old school, my first reaction was that I didn't need county government telling me what I could or couldn't do with my own property. . .It didn't take long for me to realize that I didn't know as much as I thought. . .I realized I was leaning on Mr. Kirby's expertise and knowledge to ensure everything was okay. . .It made me feel confident that the work was done properly and my problem was solved."

Division of Public Health *(continued)*

EPIDEMIOLOGY

- ◆ Recognized and investigated dozens of disease outbreaks or potential outbreaks, similar to the procedure that would be followed in the event of a bioterrorism attack. These outbreaks also can be viewed as "training" for bioterrorism preparedness. Some examples follow:
 - ◆ The restaurant-associated Salmonella outbreak in Kennesaw involved cases over a wide geographic area during a three-month period. After an epidemiologic investigation linked the cases, Public Health worked with the restaurant to identify and eliminate potential sources of the bacteria.
 - ◆ A hepatitis A outbreak required enlisting epidemiologists from several programs and areas of the state to interview large numbers of people throughout the state. Even though hepatitis A symptoms occur over a month after the person ingests the virus, they were able to identify the source (green onions from Mexico) and potentially prevent many secondary cases.

FAMILY HEALTH (MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH)

- ◆ Working with teens and with input from families, schools and faith communities, developed a campaign to encourage teens to remain abstinent from sexual activity until marriage. The campaign's print ads won an international Communicator Award of Distinction.
- ◆ Expanded the Newborn Screening Program to include screening for biotinidase deficiency, starting May 2003. In that same month, identified and treated a child with that condition.
- ◆ Alone among the Southeastern states, received the maximum federal four-year continuation grant for family planning services.
- ◆ Conducted the first six in a series of public dialogues to determine priorities for maternal and child health services, sponsored by the Governor's Council on Maternal and Infant Health.
- ◆ Increased Georgia's rate of breastfeeding initiation, from less than 31 percent in 1995 to nearly 51 percent in FY 2003.
- ◆ Received a CDC capacity building grant to bring together a wide range of agencies, businesses, and faith-based and community organizations to develop a comprehensive, statewide obesity prevention plan.

HEALTH INFORMATION AND VITAL RECORDS

- ◆ Launched an interactive set of web-based data access and analysis tools, making birth and death statistics, population data, and data on maternal and infant health and cancer available for use by the public as well as professional researchers. Users can create tables and maps and find local and statewide data without staff assistance (www.oasis.state.ga.us).

PREVENTION SERVICES

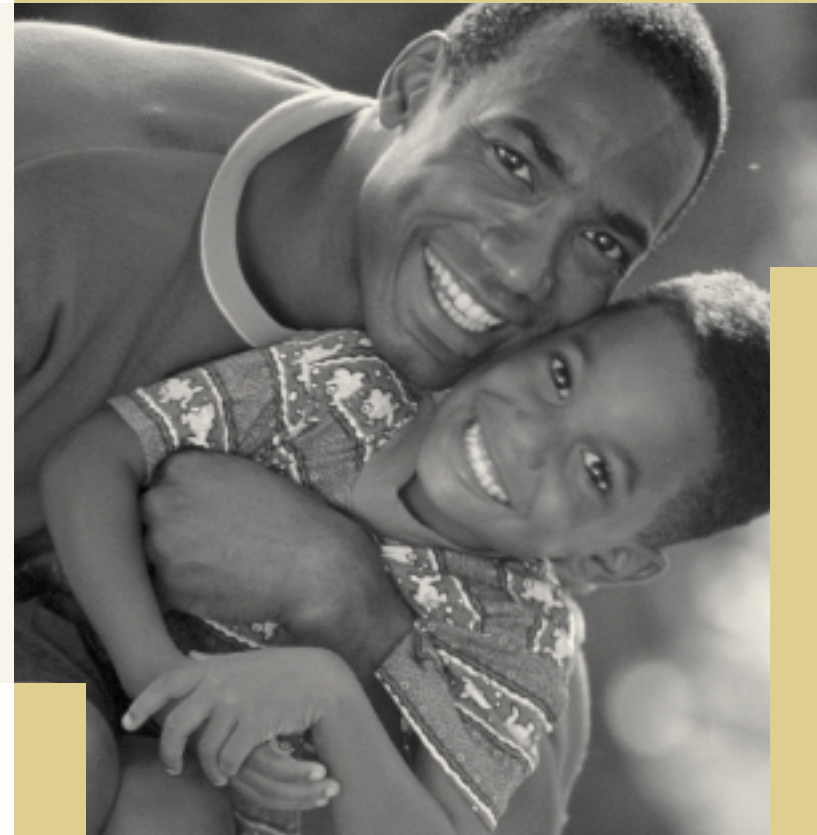
- ◆ Achieved one of the nation's highest immunization levels for two-year-olds, according to the CDC's survey of all states in calendar year 2002. To be adequately immunized a child should have received at least 20 immunizations by age two.
- ◆ Reduced the number of tuberculosis cases in Georgia by eight percent, from 577 in 2001 to 533 in 2002, and by 41 percent since the height of a resurgence of TB in the early 1990s. This was made possible by public health efforts such as contact evaluation and directly observed therapy to ensure that patients complete treatment.
- ◆ Tested over 85,500 people for HIV; about two percent were found to be infected (1,631). Expanded testing capacity by providing alternative methods such as oral and rapid testing, and targeting non-traditional venues and hard-to-reach populations.
- ◆ Conducted a social marketing campaign to encourage pregnant women to be tested for HIV, in five metropolitan Atlanta counties.

Office of Adoptions

The Office of Adoptions (OA), through partnerships and collaborations, provides Georgia’s families a full range of services to ensure the safe and appropriate placement of children in need of adoptive homes. In addition, OA’s Post Adoption Services Program offers support services that help adoptions succeed.

- ◆ Received a Federal Adoption Incentive Grant Award for increasing the number of adoptions finalized in FY 2002.
- ◆ Increased the role of licensed private agencies that offer specialized recruitment so that more children can find adoptive homes. In FY 2003 placed 990 children and finalized 995 adoptions.
- ◆ Achieved an adoption disruption rate of 7.9 percent, which is significantly lower than the national rate of 11 to 14 percent.
- ◆ Received a fourth-year federal Adoption Opportunities grant in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Social Services, to reduce barriers to the adoption of children across state lines.
- ◆ Received a third-year grant from the Freddie Mac Foundation, in partnership with WAGA-TV, to support airing “Wednesday’s Child,” that features children waiting for adoptions. Forty-three percent of the children featured on this program have been adopted.
- ◆ With WAGA-TV and the Freddie Mac Foundation, received the National Adoption Exchange Association’s media award for best segment on the “Wednesday’s Child” television program.
- ◆ Helped provide a model to other states through recognition of the Post Adoption Services Program as one of five “well-regarded” state programs studied by the Research Triangle Institute International and the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

At age 16, foster care was the only life Donnie had known. “Foster care was a blessing for me, but there were a lot of sad and hard days too. . . Every time I saw a family together it bothered me, but something inside of me wouldn’t let go,” he said. As a result of the Wednesday’s Child program, Donnie was selected by a high school teacher who had previously adopted a younger son through the Foster Care system. The two quickly bonded. Today, Donnie is majoring in education at Georgia State University and works as a program assistant for Foster Care’s Independent Living Program. “I really like what I do because I’m able to offer encouragement and hope [to other children in the Foster Care system].”



After OCSE sent a Father’s Day card to paying non-custodial parents, the wife of one father wrote: “Thank you so much for sending my husband a ‘thank you.’ It meant so much to him! So many times he’s been accused of being an unfit father and many years not even a Father’s Day card! Thank you for sending this small recognition. It should encourage a lot of fathers out there. Great idea! We’re framing it! Thirteen years almost and he’s never missed a payment. This is the first recognition he’s ever had.”

Office of Child Support Enforcement

Almost one third of Georgia’s children – 29 percent – are served by the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). OCSE helps custodial parents establish a case and collect the payments so they can provide for their children and remain independent. OCSE also locates non-custodial parents, establishes paternity, and establishes and enforces medical support orders so that non-custodial parents with medical insurance will include their children in the policies.

- ◆ In recent years, greatly expanded its ability to collect payments in arrears, by means such as intercepting income tax refunds and lottery winnings, suspending or revoking driver’s and professional licenses, garnishments, reporting parents owing more than \$1,000 in support payments to credit bureaus, and withholding child support from paychecks or unemployment benefits. As a result, OCSE delivered a record \$523.7 million in child support payments to Georgia’s children in FY 2003.
- ◆ Conducted a pilot project to establish paternity for more children. In Gwinnett County, OCSE initiated a project with the Office of State Administrative Hearings that sets aside a full day for DNA testing and hearings to establish paternity.
- ◆ Made information related to child support checks available through the Internet 24 hours a day, seven days a week, while preserving privacy. Custodial parents with established child support cases with OCSE can use a reference number and PIN to view the last six payments processed on their case, including check date, amount and name of payee.



Office of Information Technology

DHR strives to take maximum advantage of the cost efficiencies and productivity improvements afforded by today's – and tomorrow's – computer technology. As a human services agency, DHR places particular importance on the ability of technology to make government more accessible to the citizens of Georgia. In FY 2003 the department took a major step toward reaching this goal by launching the Portal Project that is transforming DHR's web pages and online services. New applications of technology are also helping the department respond to the current budget constraints.

The Office of Information Technology has primary responsibility for providing information technology support to all of DHR's divisions and offices. This includes information systems development and maintenance, consultation, infrastructure maintenance, software customer support, telecommunications, and project management.

- ◆ Launched the dhr.georgia.gov portal site on the Internet, providing the public direct, user-friendly access to DHR's published information and services. Three agencies, including the Division of Family and Children Services, were added to the portal during FY 2003.
- ◆ Implemented "Where's My Child's Check?" – an interactive portal feature that allows custodial parents to check the status of their last six child support payments without having to call program staff. Other features for both custodial and non-custodial parents are being added, including opening a child support case.
- ◆ Provided all DFCS offices access to critical business applications and the Internet, resulting in major increases in staff performance and estimated cost savings of several hundred thousand dollars per month.
- ◆ Earned full federal certification for incorporating extensive welfare reform requirements in the Office of Child Support Enforcement's computer system: \$TARS – thus avoiding multimillion-dollar federal penalties incurred by other states – and made \$TARS easier for staff to use.
- ◆ Completed an agreement with the Georgia Technology Authority and Microsoft to sell some Microsoft licenses, to save an estimated \$600,000.

Office of Investigative Services Inspector Geri Anderson recovered over \$86,000 from an embezzler in Columbus. A case manager for a DHR subcontractor, who could authorize payments to consumers with mental disabilities for services in their homes, had invented a consumer with the same last name as hers and cashed the payment checks. After the provider's mail to the "consumer" was returned from a phony post office box, Anderson was called in. She uncovered the scam and confronted the case manager, who confessed and has been indicted. All the money was returned. Anderson also verified that the manager's other cases were legitimate.

Office of Investigative Services

The Office of Investigative Services (OIS) investigates allegations of fraud in public assistance programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), food stamps, and childcare. The office also investigates suspected employee misconduct and misuse of funds by anyone employed by or contracted to DHR.

- ◆ Investigated 17,192 cases of suspected fraud.
- ◆ Discovered \$7.5 million in TANF and food stamp overpayment due to fraud and client error, all of which must be repaid.
- ◆ Discovered \$1.3 million in overpayments for childcare due to client or provider fraud and error, all of which must be repaid.
- ◆ Completed 57 investigations of employee misconduct and misuse of funds.
- ◆ In Federal Fiscal Year 2002, ranked number one in the Southeast in the number and dollar amount of fraud claims collected; the number of intentional program violation claims established; and the dollar amount of fraud claims established.



Office of Regulatory Services

The Office of Regulatory Services (ORS) inspects, licenses and monitors child care, health care and long-term care services and facilities. ORS also inspects some of these facilities for compliance with Medicare and Medicaid requirements.

In recent years the office has implemented new initiatives and taken actions to continue to protect the public and provide Georgians with better services.

- ◆ Revised licensing rules for hospitals; implemented new licensing rules for community living arrangements for people with developmental disabilities, mental illness and addictive diseases; and implemented new licensing rules for narcotics treatment programs.
- ◆ Posted inspection reports for child care facilities and personal care homes and reports of adverse actions taken against child care facilities, on the ORS web page. This is part of a major initiative to share information with the public. Georgians can use these reports to choose providers and monitor a provider's performance.
- ◆ Began requiring hospitals, clinical laboratories and end stage renal disease facilities to file reports with ORS of serious patient incidents, so the office can better determine compliance with regulations.
- ◆ Conducted 8,744 annual inspections of licensed facilities including personal care homes, day care centers, family day care homes, nursing homes, clinical laboratories, X-ray machines, ambulatory surgical treatment centers, private home care providers and end stage renal disease treatment centers. Investigated over 3,214 complaints about care in these facilities and took 560 enforcement actions.

Administration

DHR provides about 80 programs through a statewide network of county and regional offices, regional mental hospitals, and private service contractors, with a department workforce of over 18,000. DHR management constantly seeks ways to streamline and upgrade the efficiency of its personnel, facilities, financial management, emergency management, budgeting and planning.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- ◆ Successfully completed a three- to five-year strategic plan, developed business plans for all divisions' performance measurement plans, and created standards and reporting methods for all project management within DHR.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- ◆ Completed a recruitment plan and a diversity plan, and implemented a work-study policy for staff.
- ◆ Developed a compensation philosophy to provide consistent guidelines for decisions about salaries throughout the department.
- ◆ Began an executive development program for upper-level managers and completed the sixth class of the DHR Leadership Development Institute.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER RECOVERY

- ◆ Created a new position of full-time emergency manager, and began constructing an emergency operations center to be used in the event of a natural disaster or terrorist attack.
- ◆ Responded to requests from the Georgia Emergency Management Authority for help following two tornadoes, two floods and a release of hazardous materials.

AUDITS

- ◆ Completed audits of 50 county DFCS offices and financial audits of five hospitals; reviewed 641 CPA audits of contractors and 27 audits of community service boards; and completed three specially requested audits or reviews.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

- ◆ Met submission deadlines for 84 percent of funds management reports to the federal government, up from 41 percent the previous year.
- ◆ Developed a standardized contract form for all DHR offices.
- ◆ Moved DHR payroll and operating accounts and the Child Support Enforcement account to a bank certified by the Treasury as one of the three most cost-effective, for an estimated \$400,000 in savings per year.

FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

- ◆ Provided transportation services for 2.9 million trips to more than 27,000 clients — 50 percent more than last year — with a 7.6 percent reduction in cost per trip.
- ◆ Administered over 55 construction projects valued at approximately \$38 million, and \$2.3 million in institutional repair and maintenance funds.